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Conference Abstract

MIDS Level 1: Specification, conformance checklist, mapping template and instructions for use

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Abstract

Approved formally as a TDWG Task Group (TG) in September 2020, TG MIDS is working to harmonise a framework for "Minimum Information about a Digital Specimen (MIDS)". MIDS clarifies what is meant by different levels of digitization (MIDS levels) and specifies the minimum information to be captured at each level. Capturing and presenting data in future digitization in standard formats is essential so that data can be more easily understood, compared, analysed and communicated via the Internet. Adopting MIDS and working to achieve specific MIDS levels in digitization ensures that enough data are captured, curated and published such that they are useful for the widest possible range of future research, teaching and learning purposes. Adopting MIDS makes it easier to consistently measure the extent of digitization achieved over time and to set priorities for the remaining work.

In the year since MIDS was first introduced at TDWG 2020, the TG has focussed on the details of MIDS level 1, representing the basic minimum level of information to be expected and captured in basic digitization activities such as creating a catalogue record and (optionally) making photographic or other digital images of specimens.

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To help the community adopt and embed MIDS conformance as a core part of digitization and data publishing/management pipelines, the MIDS specification consists of definitions of the expected information elements, a template for mapping terms/fields in institutional collection management systems and other data management schemas to those information elements, a conformance proforma allowing declaration of how a digitization or data publishing event conforms to MIDs, and instructions for use.

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